

accurate ; with samples from normal donors it was 99·6 per cent accurate. With syphilitic blood samples it gave as high an incidence of positive tests as did methods with an equal or comparable degree of specificity.

Conclusions

The Laughlen test, which is simpler to perform, is not subject to errors in any greater degree than are other methods. It gives the same information with less work, less expense and in a shorter time. Some of its advantages are summarized below.

- (1) It is adapted for the purpose of testing all routine blood samples in hospitals.
- (2) Negative findings can be accepted as approximately 100 per cent accurate, thus eliminating the necessity for further testing.
- (3) By its routine use reports are available within a few hours of the time at which samples are obtained.
- (4) Tests of an urgent character can be made in 10 minutes after the blood serum is ready for testing.
- (5) The test can be carried out on finger blood when venous blood is difficult to obtain, as, for example, in babies and in some adults.
- (6) It is suitable for use on hospital ships, battleships or other large ocean-going vessels.
- (7) It can be used in outposts which are without the services of central laboratories.
- (8) Its sensitivity and accuracy are equal to those of the more complex methods.
- (9) A quantitative method of analysis is provided by its use.

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* For use of asterisk, see page 16.

Experimental treatment of syphilis with penicillin

According to Bessemans and Deron (writing in *Bruxelles-médical* for 23rd September 1945) infection of rabbits with syphilis appears to be effectively cured by repeated injections of penicillin. Rabbits experimentally infected with *Spirochaeta pallida* were treated with 320,000 units (12,000-18,000 units given intramuscularly every 3 hours) for a period of 8 days. It was found that *S. pallida* disappeared from the lesions in 1-3 days and that healing of the lesions—testicular syphiloma or keratitis, of 2-12 months' duration—was effected in 5-30 days. Larger amounts were given to some of the affected animals but apparently without any advantage in the rate of healing. At the end of 3-4 months a popliteal gland was transferred to a normal rabbit with subsequent negative results, indicating that the infection had been sterilized effectively. Similar experiments showed that latent syphilitic infection of 3-4 months duration in 8 mice responded to penicillin in a dosage of 12,000-18,000 units given over a period of 8 days.